



*Investing in Kentucky's Future, **One Student at a Time***

A NEW VISION FOR EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY

Students across Kentucky are growing up in a globally interconnected world, and one that is accelerating in competitiveness and opportunity. For our students to thrive in the world they are inheriting, it is up to us to create learning experiences that prepare them for this future.

While every student has the potential for success in this new world, we know that learning opportunities and outcomes have been uneven. Although many students and school districts are thriving, others are struggling, especially those in our traditionally underserved communities and groups. Kentucky's public schools will only fully realize their potential if we can ensure a quality and equitable learning experience for all students.

As educators, students, families, businesses and community members, we must come together around a new, student-centered education system that works for everyone.

To meet this exciting future, we need a bold and forward-thinking direction to give our students the learning experiences they need and deserve. This collective effort is called **United We Learn: Investing in Kentucky's Future, One Student at a Time**.

United We Learn represents what is needed now and in the short-term, as we emerge from the pandemic, and the bigger shifts necessary to get us where we need to be in the future. It also pays homage to our state motto – *United We Stand, Divided We Fall*.

Some may read the words "**Investing in Kentucky's Future, One Student At a Time**" and think all we are talking about is funding. Although adequate and equitable funding for our public education system is critical, the investments and changes we need go much deeper.

Investing in Kentucky's Future means everyone in our Commonwealth - educators, families, community leaders and business leaders - working to support our public schools in bringing about deep and authentic learning experiences for our students.

The change we need is not surface or superficial. We need profound shifts in what students experience in our schools so they are prepared and have the opportunity to develop the skills that will make them successful workers, entrepreneurs, community leaders and citizens in their future.

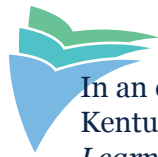
We invite you to join in this journey, sharing examples of meaningful learning and engagement in your community and our schools by using our hashtag **#UnitedWeLearnKY** and following **@UnitedWeLearnKY** on Twitter and Instagram.



HOW WE GOT HERE

In the spring of 2021, Kentucky's Commissioner of Education and Chief Learner Jason E. Glass staged a series of listening tours across the Commonwealth to hear from Kentuckians about what was going well in our schools, and what needed to be different. These meetings culminated in the formation of the Kentucky Coalition for Advancing Education, a group with diverse perspectives from across the Commonwealth whose goal was to bring together the lessons learned from the listening tours.

The coalition includes students, families, teachers, school administrators and community leaders from across Kentucky. The group is intentionally diverse, and brings together voices and participants who have not always been at the table when decisions are made about Kentucky's schools.



In an effort to create a vision for education in Kentucky, the coalition developed the *United We Learn: Hearing Kentucky's Voices on the Future of Education* report that lays out how education can be transformed into an enriching experience that prepares students for life in this rapidly changing world.

KENTUCKY'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- **Kentuckians will feel a greater sense of common purpose, satisfaction and appreciation for their hard work in providing quality educational experiences.**
- **Schools will be places for people to learn together, gather and celebrate through a network of trusting relationships to support student success.**
- **Schools and districts will build trusting partnerships across communities to foster authentic collaboration to best serve our students.**
- **Inequities will be addressed directly and all members of the community will be involved in overcoming barriers and challenges.**
- **Schools will be centers of curiosity, motivation and engagement and provide an open and welcoming environment.**
- **Schools will be accountable for student success in a manner that inspires.**
- **Real conversations will take place, where everyone is empowered to share good ideas that lead to improvements for all students - especially around innovation and collaboration.**
- **Schools will create pathways for students to have individual achievement and collective prosperity for their broader communities.**
- **Assessments will focus on improving outcomes that matter to students and their future.**
- **The education community will have a culture that doesn't shy away from addressing tough issues and seeks collaborative ways to solve them.**



WHERE WE GO NEXT

To bring this bold vision for Kentucky's schools to life, we need a united effort that engages every community and school in the Commonwealth. Our kids cannot wait for political action for our work to begin. Although lawmakers and policymakers will hopefully significantly help this effort, the changes we need will happen in communities and classrooms and should begin today. We do not need permission to begin improving learning experiences for Kentucky's children.

Our work already has begun with Kentucky's Innovative Learning Network. Seven districts – Allen, Fleming, Frankfort Independent, Jefferson, Johnson, Logan and Shelby – currently serve as full Local Laboratories of Learning (L3s), where they are piloting new assessment, accountability and learning approaches. These districts also have formed local and inclusive coalitions to guide their work. We will learn from their experiences and help to bring about the large-scale changes for our entire state.

Beyond these leading districts, opportunities to engage communities and create deep and meaningful learning experiences for students abound in our Commonwealth. We call upon every district, school and community to engage with this **United We Learn** effort and help us bring about a bold new era of education in Kentucky.



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION